

How do Cultural Heritage Institutions (CHIs) drive innovation?

These are some of the roles...

Role	Definition	Key functions	Key practices	Governance model / Ownership	General examples	Contribution to innovation ecosystem
Cultural anchors	Institutions that provide symbolic and identity-based grounding for communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Affirm collective identity -Legitimate place-based action -Enable cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Curating memory and narratives -Hosting rituals -Acting as custodians 	Public / citizen-led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Local museums -Heritage libraries -Memory archives -Community museums -National archives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Legitimacy -Trust -Symbolic infrastructure
(social) Connectors	Institutions that act as platforms for participation, dialogue, and mutual learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Facilitate engagement -Host participatory processes -Mediate across sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Forums, workshops -Co-design -Translating between fields (education, business, etc.) -Urban-rural bridging 	Public / Mixed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural centres -Public libraries -Community labs -Inclusive heritage programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Social capital -Cross-sector enablement -Co-creation and inclusivity
Economic integrators	Institutions that link heritage to markets and economic flows, managing sustainability and impact through entrepreneurial or hybrid models.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Design new funding models -Enable economic participation -Connect culture and commerce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural entrepreneurship -Value mediation -Diversified revenue streams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Heritage attractions -Cultural start-ups -Market-driven site -Management -Social enterprises linked to heritage 	Private / Public-private	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Ensure long-term viability by embedding heritage innovation in economic circuits -Align incentives across sectors

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Experimental spaces	Institutions that create room to test new ideas, methods, or partnerships in protected, flexible, or informal ways.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Foster safe-to-fail environments -Support experimentation -Capture emerging practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Medialabs -Living labs -Hackathons 	Public / mixed / citizen-led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Living labs -Temporary cultural hubs -Hackathons -Experimental archival practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -De-risk innovation -Flexible environments
Field builders	Institutions that strengthen the broader ecosystem by shaping narratives, building capacity, and cultivating shared standards and knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Promote shared language -Amplify models -Coordinate communities of practice -Broker resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Producing research -Hosting conferences -Supporting peer learning 	Public / Mixed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cultural observatories -Heritage education platforms -Transnational projects on upskilling or impact evaluation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strategy -Visibility -Learning networks -Scaling
Institutional hackers	Institutions that bend or stretch existing rules to prototype new models, navigate rigid systems, or challenge power dynamics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expand space for innovation -Prototype governance -Navigate institutional constraints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Citizen-led heritage - Unofficial uses of public infrastructure - Negotiating ownership or access 	Citizen-led / Hybrid / Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Grassroots -Archives -Activist heritage projects -Citizen-run museums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Expand innovation frontiers by disrupting norms and reframing institutional rules -Explore new governance pathways

developed by Josep Maria Folch Olivella for the *ekip* project